
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO GENDER-NEUTRAL TERMINOLOGY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 578, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§578- Interpretation of words to be gender-neutral.

5 With regard to the rights, benefits, protections, and
6 responsibilities of persons set forth in this chapter, all
7 gender-specific terminology, such as "wife", "husband",
8 "mother", "father", or similar terms, shall be construed in a
9 gender-neutral manner. This rule of interpretation shall apply
10 to all administrative rules adopted hereunder."

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 580, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
12 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
13 and to read as follows:

14 "§580- Interpretation of words to be gender-neutral.

15 With regard to the rights, benefits, protections, and
16 responsibilities of persons set forth under this chapter, all
17 gender-specific terminology, such as "wife", "husband",
18 "mother", "father", "aunt", "uncle", "niece", "nephew", or



1 similar terms, shall be construed in a gender-neutral manner.
2 This rule of interpretation shall apply to all administrative
3 rules adopted hereunder."

4 SECTION 3. Section 578-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended to read as follows:

6 "§578-1 Who may adopt; jurisdiction; venue. Any [~~proper~~]
7 unmarried adult person, [~~not married, or~~] any person married to
8 the legal [~~father or mother~~] parent of a minor child, or a
9 [~~husband and wife~~] married couple jointly[~~7~~] may petition the
10 family court of the circuit in which the person or persons
11 reside or are in military service [~~or the family court of the~~
12 ~~circuit~~], in which the individual to be adopted resides or was
13 born, or in which a child placing organization approved by the
14 department of human services under the provisions of section
15 346-17 having legal custody (as defined in section 571-2) of the
16 child is located[~~7~~] for leave to adopt an individual toward whom
17 the person or persons do not sustain the legal relationship of
18 parent and child and for a change of the name of the individual.
19 When adoption is the goal of a permanent plan recommended by the
20 department of human services and ordered pursuant to section
21 587A-31, the department may petition for adoption on behalf of



1 the proposed adoptive parents. The petition shall be in [~~such~~]
2 a form and shall include [~~such~~] information and exhibits as may
3 be prescribed by the family court."

4 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
5 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

6 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2024.



Report Title:

Gender-Neutral Terminology; Statutory Interpretation; Adoption; Annulment, Divorce, and Separation

Description:

Requires gender-specific terminology used in adoption and annulment, divorce, and separation matters to be construed in a gender-neutral manner. Takes effect 1/1/2024. (CD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

